In the claims:

All of the claims standing for examination are reproduced below. Claims 1, 2, 3 and 4 are amended in this response.

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1. (presently amended) A method of assigning tasks to agents in a service center based on agent skills required to service individual tasks, comprising the steps of:

(a) in response to a task to be serviced, ascertaining all agent skills relevant to process the task out of a set of n defined skills[,];

(b) establishing a skill expression that defines a logical relationship between all skills relevant to service the task[,];

(c) calculating the skill weight ~~W(I)~~ w i for each relevant skill that represents the relative importance of the skill i in the skill expression[,];

(d) deriving a score for each agent qualified to service the task based on the calculated skill weights[,]; and

(e) selecting an agent to service the task from the set of qualified agents according to the scores of each qualified agent.

2. (presently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~the step of~~ in step (c), calculating a weight w i for a given skill i further comprises calculating the value $\frac{a}{2m-1}$,

where a equals the number of times in ~~the~~ a truth table corresponding to the skill expression, that both the skill i and the skill expression are logically true and m is the number of unique skills specified in the skill expression.

3. (presently amended) the method of claim 2 wherein ~~the step of~~ in step (d), deriving a set of qualified agents further comprises;

calculating a distance variable D for each agent equal to

$$\left[1 - \sum_{i=1..q} \frac{W_i X (SP_i - EP_i)}{10xq} \right];$$

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where SPi is the proficiency of the agent for skill i and EPi is the required proficiency of skill i[,];

calculating a matched weight variable MW for each agent equal to the summation of the calculated weights for each skill possessed by the agent[,];

calculating a smallest weight variable SW equal to the smallest summation of weights for a combination of skills that satisfies the skill expression[,];

calculating a logic ratio variable LR equal to

$$1 - \left[\frac{\frac{(TW-SW)}{NZ}}{2} \right]$$

where NZ is the number of skills with a weight of greater than zero[,];

calculating a weight ratio variable WR equal to

$$1 - \left[\frac{MW - SW}{TW} \right],$$

calculating a non-relevant skills ratio NR equal to

$$\min\left[\frac{2^m}{2^n}\right],$$

calculating a score S for each agent equal to D times LR times WR times NR[,]; and

selecting an agent to service the task based on the value of S.

4. (presently amended) A method of assigning tasks to agents in a service center based on agent skills required to service individual tasks, comprising the steps of:

(a) in response to a task to be serviced, ascertaining all agent skills relevant for processing the task out of a set of n defined skills and a level of proficiency associated with each task[,];

(b) calculating a weight for each relevant skill that represents the relative importance of the skill in the skill expression[,];

(c) deriving a set of agents qualified to service the task according to the skill expression[,]; and

(d) selecting an agent to service the task according to the calculated scores.